

Headline: Requesting to Know What Happened to Billions in Oil Money that Gushed Out of Libya

Economics is often forgotten in the wake of conflicts although it plays a major role in global politics today and is inextricably linked to it. Many wonder if NATO's intervention in Libya was motivated by selfish reasons. Why, they ask, would NATO defend Libya and not Syria? Well, there is the difficulty of passing resolutions in the United Nations Security Council. Two out of the five permanent members, [Russia and China](#), are against intervention, strictly ruling out any possibility of it. Beyond these surface organizational and bureaucratic factors, there remains the more intricate politics and economics of intervention.

Intervention can be motivated by the desire to project power, protect certain ideologies, or maintain political and economical status quo. Now, more than ever, the economy drives political decisions. Libya is one of the African/Middle Eastern countries affected by the "[oil curse](#)". This pattern says that developing countries well endowed with a natural resource, such as oil, are more prone to corruption and conflict. The money and power derived from world dependency on oil is enormous. One need not look too far into the past to see how much influence oil can wield. The [OPEC oil crisis](#) is proof that oil power is dangerous.

How was oil involved in the rule and then the downfall of Muammar Al-Qaddafi? Certainly during his rule it contributed to his immense wealth and vast exploitation of the Libyan people. In terms of his downfall, the NATO intervention appears to be economically motivated in part. Libya was not a strategic political partner to have. At most, Libya was important insofar as whatever happened there would spill over into other states. But Libya has no real civil society, state, or military structure to make her an international rival. However economically, foreigners were and still are [invested in](#), and to an extent [dependent on](#), oil production in Libya. Some argue this is why NATO and the international community were more willing to act in Libya than in Syria.

In Libya they are still figuring out how to handle the oil wealth, specifically the money frozen from the profits during the Al-Qaddafi regime. The Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) set up by Al-Qaddafi took oil gains and invested that money in banks, hedge funds, properties, hotels, and the stock markets. "[Money gushed out](#) like oil from that well that created it." Since Al-Qaddafi's assets were frozen last year, who is in control of the money and where it is exactly is uncertain. However, the LIA is a clear indication that outsiders had significant economic ties to Libya and it would be wrong not to consider this when questioning the motives of NATO intervention. Responsibility for sticking their foot in the door is a price NATO members are going to have to pay, such as explaining why they will not intervene in Syria, with or without approval from the UN Security Council.